among other things recommended enactment of a Law on Freedom of Information, and Amendment to Section 5 of Official Secrets Act, 1923 in order to remove- its omnibus character.

Air Crashes involving IAF trainee pilots

*116. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the number of air crashes involving trainee Indian Air Force pilots has increased; if so, the number of such crashes occurred during last five years indicating the number of casualties thereon;

(b) what is the cost involved in training an Indian pilot and the details of facilities including insurance cover at present available;

(c) when were such facilities revised last; and

(d) what are the reasons for nonpayment of compensation to the kith and kin of a pilot died in August, 1996 as reported in the Hindustan Times, dated the 7th July, 1997, and by when the same would be paid?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Details of cost of training and also the facilities available to the trainee pilots as currently prevalent in 1997 are given in the statement laid on the Table of the House. *{See* below).

(d) Except ex-gratia award of Rs. 375/- per month, the dealth benefits have been sanctioned to the next-of-kin of the deceased cadet (Fit Ctd Sunil Kumar). Monthly ex-gratia award will be sanctioned on receipt of requisite dependency documents from the father of the deceased cadet.

Statement

Details of cost of training and facilities to trainee pilots

The training cost per pilot at 1997-98 level for each of the substreams is as given below:—

(i) Fighter Stream Rs. 5.68 crores
(ii) Transport Stream Rs. 2.48 crores (iii) Helicopter Stream Rs. 1.65 crores

2. Pilot trainees of the IAF are made members of the Air Force Group Insurance Scheme (AFGIS) from the date of joining the Training institute and effective from 1.5.1997 are provided with life insurance cover of Rs. 10 lakhs with monthly contribution of Rs. 800/- and Rs. 560/- for aircrew and ground duty branches, respectively.

3. In addition the following ex-gratia awards are authorised by the Government.

(a) Lumpsum ex-gratia award of Rs. 45,000/-

(b) Ex-gratia award on monthly basis @ Rs. 375/- per month (excluding Dearness relief and Interim relief which is paid separately thereon).

Setting up of a Technology Mission for Cotton Development

*117. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to set up a technology mission for cotton development in the country to improve cotton production, marketing, processing etc;

(b) whether such a mission is proposed to be set up in Gujarat which is the largest cotton growing State in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?